

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action having a date of mailing of July 12, 2004, the applicant has amended the listing of claims by canceling independent claims 13, 20, and 41. In their place, applicants have inserted claims 42, 43, and 44.

In the new claims, the applicant seeks to further point out the relationship between the two tubular sections in such a way that does not read upon Hobbs. Specifically, the applicant has avoided reference to an "inner space" and instead defines the tubular sections as having "tubular walls". Although the reference Hobbs includes tubular sections, the area of overlap does occur between the tubular sections, but instead occurs at a notch and groove in the flange, as noted in Figure 1. Thus, since new claims 42 and 43 specifically note and define the tubular walls sliding over one another, they do not read on the Hobbs reference. The tubular walls of Hobbs as noted by reference numeral 10, do not slide upon one another. In view of this difference, applicant believes the new claims are allowable over the reference.

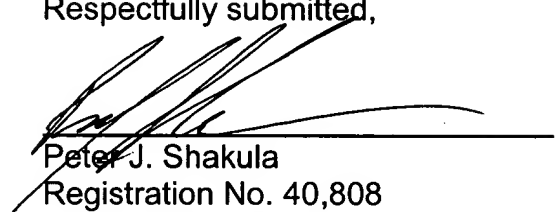
Further distinguished from Hobbs, claim 43 includes limitations that the tubular sections are a spindle, and a rotatable target, structures which are not mentioned in Hobbs. Therefore, claim 43 is patentably distinct from Hobbs for that reason alone. Additionally, claim 43 includes further definition that the clamping ring exercises a uniform pressure on the sealing ring. This limitation is not found in Hobbs.

With reference to claim 44, the flange of the first tubular section is limited in diameter so that it is no larger than the diameter of second tubular section. The flange in Hobbs exceeds the diameter of the second tubular section and thus does not satisfy the claim limitation. For this reason, claim 44 is allowable over Hobbs.

Wherefore, in view of the above amendments and arguments, the applicant believes the application is in condition for allowance.

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Respectfully submitted,



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